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CHAPTER II.

SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.

Ancestral Family ----- Village Community ------- Family ~~~ Kinship Terms --- Slaves.

One of the difficulties experienced by all anthropologists when investigating the life of a, so-called, primitivem people is the inter-dependence of the social, religious and economic aspects of their culture. Perhaps in few areas do these elements form such a tangled skein as among the Bella Coola, This not only made investigation in the field difficult, it also renders a clear exposition of the lives of these people a difficult matter. It has been found impossible ~~xxxxxxxxx~~ to avoid, entirely, references to customs which will be described in later chapters of this monograph, although the writer has striven to reduce these to a minimum.

In many cases ethnologists have found it possible and convenient to begin a description of a tribe with an account of the smallest social unit, the family. Among the Bella Coola the influence of ~~the~~ mythology is so great that it largely governs the choice of mates, and hence of the composition of the family. Accordingly, it is advisable to describe first the mythological concepts which play such an important part in the life of this tribe.

ANCESTRAL FAMILY

The Bella Coola believe that long, long ago Alquntam, the supreme god, caused the first men and women to be created in his house in the land above. He sent these first people down in groups of two, three, four, or more, brothers and sisters or more rarely man and wife, to different parts of the Bella Coola valley. They brought with them ~~the~~ tools, houses, clothing, even the fish and animals on which the Indians live. More important, from the viewpoint of social organization, they brought with them the prerogative of different ceremonial dances. In fact Bella Coola culture as it exists to-day (1) was so created by Alquntam in the far distant past, it is not,

(1). When the writer visited Bella Coola many of the customs described in this monograph were in a state of decay, while others had recently fallen entirely from use.

Slaves.

according to the Bella Coola, a product of slow growth. There have been additions, particularly of rites obtained by marriages with the members of neighbouring tribes, and the first ancestors were so powerful and so closely in contact with the supernatural beings that they could perform rites of their which modern man is incapable, but fundamentally the life of the modern Bella Coola is patterned on that of his first forbears.

Considering the tribe as a whole, it may be said that the Bella Coola are philosophers. They demand a reason for everything, though once a reason has been given, and has been accepted, they think no more about the matter. Unquestionably, the elaborate mythology of the Bella Coola was evolved to explain their social organization, but it is equally without question that these myths, now accepted as facts, have had a great influence on the lives of the people, and that the social structure of the tribe has tended to conform to the myths.

Each group of the first people formed a village community, and pre-empted hunting-grounds in the vicinity. These usually consisted of small valleys opening from the main Bella Coola River, tracts which could thus be easily defined. Each group also took possession of a suitable part of the river for a salmon-weir, or, if located on the coast, of a convenient place for an ocean fish-trap. In course of time the first people married, of neccessity with the members of other villages. According to the myths, and equally according to modern Bella Coola practice, the women usually moved to the villages of their husbands. When a child was born, it naturally grew up to share in the hunting-grounds of its father's villages. Moreover, the father was able to bestow on his child various ceremonial dances, the concept of which he had either brought with him from above, or which he initiated on this earth. It is assumed that all the first people were mighty chiefs, and thereby able to initiate dances in a way that few modern men have

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It would be difficult and pedantic, as well as useless, to attempt to differentiate between practises carried out entirely in 1922 -24, and those performed in part, and those which had not been done for a few years. Consequently, the present tense has been used throughout this monograph for descriptions of all rites both of the present and recent past.

been able to equal. But the mothers of these children, the first born on this earth, according to the Bella Coola, did not surrender the rites of their own villages at marriage. Consequently their children were of almost as much interest to the brothers and other relatives of their mothers as to their fathers. It was taken as a matter of course that a child had full rights in the village of his mother, and from her, and from her relatives, he likewise received dance prerogatives. Thus each child was a member of a bi-lateral social group. From actual residence in his father's village a child tended to be more intimately associated with him, and his brothers, than with his mother's relatives, but this did not prevent him from visiting at the home of the latter where he was received as a member of thta village. Through the bestowal of dance prerogatives by his mother and the members of her family, his relationship with them was further emphasized. Such a child was, in fact, a full member of two groups.

When the mebers of the second generation married and begot children, each of these could have been members of four groups, that of his father's father, father's mother, mother's father, and mother's mother. The Bella Coola belive that there were approximately forty-five groups of first settlers, according to the forty-five towns, and it is obvious that if the system of intermarriage had continued for a few generations, a man would have been a member of each of these first groups. It is always assumed by the Bella Coola that their first ancestors came to this earth at a period far more remote than a few generations ago, and yet at the present time no Bella Coola claims to be a descandant of more than eight of these first groups, while most claim descent from only two or three. In part this can be explained by forgetting, though a Bella Coola would regard this staement as heresy. The continuous residence in the village of the father has tended to emphasize relationship with the ancestral group that first populated his village, and there is no doubt that actual relationship, through the mother, with the members of other groups must often have been forgotten in the course of generations. The writer uses the term, ancestral family, to designate those individuals who believe themselves to be descended from one of the first groups that populated this earth.

As has been said, a man may claim descent from as many as eight of these

groups, that is, he may be a member of eight ancestral families. It is clear that some restrictive means must have been employed to limit the choice of marriage partners, otherwise a man's membership in ancestral families would have been far greater than it is. The process of forgetting is immaterial; a man may be in reality descended from many diverse groups, but as far as social organization is concerned he is a member of only a limited number of ancestral families. And this chapter deals with social organization, not with pysical anthropology.

The explanation lies in the high regard with which the members of an ancestral family esteem the prerogatives they have received from their first ancestors. Returning to a consideration of the first settlements on this earth, it is clear that ,with the marriage of the first women, their brothers were called upon to share their rights, both practical in regard to hunting territory, and ceremonial with regard to dance prerogatives, among their sisters' children. Bella Coola mythology contains no references to unwillingness on the part of the first men so to share their rights, in fact their own children were benefitting equally from the marriages of their fathers with other women. But, say the Bella Coola, after these first marriages, necessarily exogamic, men realised that it would be foolish to allow their children to marry far afield and so transmit valuable prerogatives. It was far wiser for a man to seek as future son-in-law a man of the same ancestral family as himslef or his wife. Then any resultant children would come into this world provided by both parents with common relatives, so that the child would be, as they express it, "Held close and supported by a close circle of ancestors".

It will be noticed that Bella Coola logic does not explain how the marriages of the first generations could have been arranged without violating the laws of incest. The principle, however, has been carried out until the present day, so that a man endeavors to arrange marriages for his children with members of the same ancestral family. One of the strongest Bella Coola desires is to "make good the path" for his children, and this can best be done when they are born to find themselves amply provided with relatives of common descent. There is

no belief in the active participation of distant ancestors in the affairs of men, yet, though incapable of clear expression, the Bella Coola feel strongly that a child is born into the companionship of its deceased realtives back to the beginning of time. This endogatic principle will be described in greater detail in Chapter VI, it has been necessary to mention it here to explain the composition of the ancestral family.

In recent years there has been a tendency among some Bella Coola to endeavor to marry foreign women in order that they, or their children, may obtain new prerogatives. Thus a trend towards exogamy has arisen from the same causes which led to endogamy. It is obvious that the offspring of such marriages cannot enjoy the physical support of the same relatives from both parents, but some men have felt that this was offset by their obtaining of highly desirable foreign prerogatives. It is said that this practice was first done by a certain Potlas, father of a Bella Coola now about sixty years of age. It is probable that white influence had nothing to do with this radical innovation, although its wide adoption since that time has been made more easy by the establishment of peaceful conditions on the coast.

Strong as is the belief in a common ancestry, it is unlikely that this would have sufficed to hold together the members of the ancestral family, without some definite prerogatives. These are of two kinds:

(A.) Names. (B). Land.

Names.

The fundamental principle which governs all Bella Coola names is that each must be originated with respect to some event of comparative importance. It is unthinkable to apply a casual designation to a child. At a person's death his name, or names, may be transmitted to a relative, and it is proper that the owner of a name should know when, by whom, and for what reason, it was first created. Before coming to this earth the first people were all given names by Alquntam, and these names have since been carefully transmitted and are still in use. No one name can be given to two individuals; instances occur of two people having the same name, but in such cases they have different origins. One person may have several

names of different kinds, each carrying with it some prerogative of a dance or other nature, but all transmissable, and at the owner's deaths these names may pass to different relatives. The only non-inheritable names are those obtained by shamans as a result of their supernatural experiences.

Not only did each group of first settlers of this earth bring with them a number of names from above, but they also created a number on this earth and bestowed them on their children, and on the children of their sisters of brothers, in whom they felt an almost parental interest. To mark the dignity of the names all present received presents from the creator of the name, the person who called them together for the ceremony. The importance of the individual depended largely upon the value of the goods distributed with respect to his name, a concept which will be elaborated in the following chapter. The descendants of these first people likewise created new names, and established their dignity by means of the distribution of presents, a practice which has been continued until the present day. It follows that any complete rorigin myth should include a large number of names, not only those brought down from the land above (1), but also those created by the powerful first people on this earth itself.(2). This type of name will be referred to henceforth as an "ancestral name", no distinction being made between those actually brought from above and those made on earth. This is in accordance with Bella Coola usage.

Soon after the birth of a child his father, uncle, either on the paternal or maternal side, or other near relative (3) calls the members of the village togther to bestow a name on the infant. The name selected must be embodied in the origin myth of one or other of the parents, and must be one not then in use by any other member of the community. This name is the outward mark of the position of the child in the ancestral family. Without such a formal conferring of an ancestral name a child would be withour status in the community, but as children are always welcome some relative will always be ready to confirm the bestowal of the name by the necessary distribution of goods, a feature that is present at every Bella Coola ceremonial. The writer endeavored to learn what

(1). Such a name is a smatł as skwatstas, a "Petrified name".
(2). Such a name is a sxwanat a skwatsta, an "Earth-made name".
(3). The most careful investigation failed to show that it was incumbent on any

would happen if the number of children born into an ancestral family exceeded the number of ancestral names embodied in its origin myth, but, as was to be expected, without result. Established custom demands that a name be provided for every child, and one is always provided. Without question names must be invented, usually from some event in the origin myth, but it is always claimed that such a name was used by a long deceased ancestor. In fact, the social custom agrees with the requirements of the mythological concept.

An ancestral name given to a child is spoken of as an atsqwtutł name, and the recipient as an atsqwtutł, which may be translated as "commoner." He may be given several names from one origin myth, or names from different origin myths if his parents have distinct ancestry. And these names may either be those actually brought down from above by the first people, those made on this earth by them, or those made at some important event by later persons. Irrespective of what combination of these possibilities a child may have, he is still a commoner, and his ability to rise from that position to that of chief depends on his own, or his parents', ability to give potlatches, as will be described in the next chapter. In such a case his atsqwtutł name is said to have been elevated to that of a stalt mx (chief's) name.

The ancestral family may therefore be defined as those whose atsqwtutł names are embodied in the same origin myth.

What is the stability of this group?

In consequence of the large number of names theoretically embodied in every myth, and of the necessity for validating the bestowal of anyone of these by means of presents, it follows that there are always a large number of dormant names. The Bella Coola describe these as being, "In the burial ground". They are in fact, dead. Anyone of these names can be recrudesced by any member of the ancestral family. If a woman marries into a foreign tribe her relatives will occasionally give her husband an ancestral name outright, In such a case that name is permanently alienated from the ancestral family to which it belonged, and this should only happen when an ancestral family is reduced to a few individuals, all of whom agree to the transaction. But more often a woman takes as

a wedding gift to her husband a name which it is understood cannot be transmitted among his relatives unless he has children; since it is the presence of children belonging to both ancestral families which virtually hold the two in together. The brother of a woman so married will also bestow names of her children, as further mark of their incorporation in their mother's ancestral family. But it is customary and proper for the ancestral family into which a woman is married and begets children, to reciprocate the compliment a few generations later, and by the marriage of one of their women to restore the names ~~brought~~ to the ancestral family to which they properly belonged. This practice of "return-marriage" has been the rule for according to the Bella Coola
generations, since the ~~beg~~ first exogamic marriages of the first people, with the result that names tend to return to the descendants, traced patrilineally, of the first people to use them.

In the case ~~t~~ of a woman who marries a foreigner and begets children, the latter will, ~~xxxx~~ of course, belong to two distinct ancestral groups. How long the remains with
remembrance of the different groups in which a person ~~xxx~~ is related is difficult to say, but the following is an instance of the way such is carried on for several generations. Qwai lits is an orphan about ten years of age, now living in Bella Coola; he is looked upon with considerable respect as being a member of ancestral families in Bella Coola, Kimsquit, Smith's Inlet, Kitkatla and Kitlobe. His pedigree explains his powers. The symbol = marks a marriage, and the male is shown on the left in each case.

Sqwli = ?
Bella Coola Smith's Inlet.

Kwalais = ?
Bella Coola.

? = ?
Kimsquit

? = ?
Kitkatla Kitlobe.

? ========== ?

Qwai lits

Theoretically, Qwai lits is as much a native of Smith's Inlet as he is of Bella Coola where his father made his home. If he should visit Smith's Inlet and make known his pedigree, he would be welcomed by the members of the ancestral family

of his great-great-grandmother. Difficulties of communication, increased by the frequent wars between different tribes, made it virtually impossible in the old days to keep touch with relatives in distant tribes, except in the case of a mighty chief who was able to invite visitors from great distances to a feast. Thus names taken by women to foreign husbands tended to be lost to the members of her ancestral family. This factor tended to make the ancestral family practically a patrilineal unit. In course of a few generations such names carried afield would be recrudesces as if dormant by some member of the family, and all recollection of the foreign marriage forgotten.

The converse of this process of loss, is the assimilation to an origin myth of names originally brought into the ancestral family by a woman coming from abroad. Unless intercourse and friendly relations were maintained by "return marriages", it would be found in a few generations that no myth was remembered to account for the name, and this would naturally then be interwoven into the well-known ancestral myth.

It has been thus far assumed that the only prerogatives wrapped up with ancestral names have been a knowledge of the myth in which they are embodied. But if, for example, one of the first ancestors erected a totem-pole of a certain design and displayed it at a gathering when he took for himself a name, hence forth the only person entitled to use that totem-pole design is the person who has the legal right to the name in question. The same principle governs all dance names, each entitles its owner to perform a certain dance. Thus it is impossible to enlarge the previously given definition of an ancestral family, by saying that:

THE ANCESTRAL FAMILY CONSISTS OF THOSE WHOSE NAMES, EMBODYING DEFINITE PREROGATIVES, ARE EMBODIED IN A SINGLE ORIGIN MYTH.

A stranger finds it easier to understand why names are so carefully maintained within the ancestral family by thinking of them as symbols of prerogatives, but it must be emphasized that the Bella Coola preserve with equal jealousy those names whose only prerogative is that they mark this actual membership.

If, then, the ancestral family be regarded as a group possessing a large number of name-prerogatives, it may then be asked how these are distributed among

the members of the group. The first point to be emphasized is that the ancestral family is a unit held together without definite social mechanism. There is no accepted "head" of the family, nor are there any clearly formulated laws governing the transmission of the name-prerogatives. Before death a man usually calls together his relatives and wills to those he desires his personal property in slaves and canoes, and his names. But a name, even though willed, does not become the property of the new owner unless he is able to validate his ownership by the distribution of presents, and meanwhile the name is "dead". If, during this period, some other member of the ancestral family should desire the name for a child, or for himself, he can take possession of it by the customary distribution of presents. In doing so he would unquestionably rouse the anger of the legatee, but the latter cannot himself use the name since it is already in use. Even at the present time there are bitter quarrels over the assumption of names, and it is to be assumed that such have been the case for many generations. If a man can promptly validate a name willed to him, it is most unusual for anyone else to try to forestall him.

Considering the extreme fluidity of the whole system it is surprising that quarrels are not even more common. On the one hand these are limited by the system of wills, by which a man bequeaths his most valuable personal property, especially his intangible property in kusiut name-prerogatives. Ancestral names may also be willed but since the value of these depends on the goods expended to validate them, there is little advantage in having even one of the names which came from above in the beginning of time. Indeed a chief who is the legal owner of such a name will often choose to elevate his position with respect to a title of comparatively recent date. But if any person who is not a member of the ancestral family should dare to use an ancestral name, then all the members rise to avenge the theft, for such they feel it to be. Names are sometimes lent, or hired in return to the individual, not the ancestral family, for definite sums. If these are not returned for several generations quarrels are apt to arise through the claim of the recipient

(1). See page .

claims to be the real owner of the name and not the temporary possessor. During his tenancy of the name he is entitled to any prerogative attached thereto, but is not considered a bona fide member of the ancestral family.

Instances have occurred in which an old man or woman, deserted by his relatives, believes himself to be the last survivior of an ancestral family. He may then bestow his names and the myth to those who have befriended him, or they may be taken by those who bury him. Some individuals are constanly watching to bury friendless old people in the hope of so obtaining names. But in almost every case this leads to friction, since it is virtually impossible for an ancestral family ever to die out. Perhaps in the next generation, perhaps in athe following one, some youth will claim to be descended from the first ancestors of the supposedly defunct family, and accordingly lay claim to the myth and names embodiedtherein. This automatically leads to a feud with the person, or his descendants, who has laid claim to the names through aid given to the "last" of the family.

When we turn from these rare instances of an ancestral family becoming practically extinct to the ancestral family as it usually exists, largely centred in one village, but with members scattered in a few other localities, we find no central organization. It is gener lly recognized that a family belongs in the village where its first ancestors settled, and the leading chief of that village thus comes to have an important position in the family. But he has no status as "head" of it. His advice may be appealed to in cases of disputes concerning names, but he lacks any judicial authority. Theoretically, the descendants of the elder of two first people are considered as "elder brothers and elder sisters" of those descended from a younger brother, but this is nothing more than an accepted fact, it plays no part in the social life of the community.

Before leaving the subject of names, it is advisable to refer briefly to another type of name found in origin myths, namely, those of dogs. The first ancestral groups had dogs, and those dogs had names, or were given them by their powerful masters. Ever since that time these names can be applied to their dogs by their descendants. It is unnecessary to validate the name of a dog, but no two canines can be given the same name at the same time, according to the same rule which governs the bestowal of human names. The writer failed to investigate

this matter in detail, and the only dog's name collected was one for which the origin myth is as follows:—

Soon after the first settlement of Tal io in the begiining of time, the houses in that village were built in parallel rows, one above the other, up the side of a steep knoll. At the very top of this was a toilet-house, built over such an incline that excrement rolled down the hill-side. In consequence on of the early chiefs living there gave to his dog the name, Nuliqw nuth i m nk , "Rolling excrement", a dog's name since preserved in the ancestral family of his descendants.

Land.

As with names, the easiest way to understand the property rights of the ancestral family in land is by first considering the mythological explanation, which mirrors conditions as they existed when the first white men went to Bella Coola. On first coming to this earth the first people prospected for suitable settlement sites, places where salmon and olachen could be caught, and if possible near side valleys where berries were abundant. These they pre-empted as hunting-grounds, free to the members of the group, but forbidden to others. Waste land, far removed from any village was, and still is, free to anyone. A few years after the first settlements had been made, according to the myths, the supreme god sent down to Kimsquit a certain Aiguntam who allotted and marked the land which was the property of each village, at at that time a village consisted merely of a group of the first settlers. The writer did not hear of a similar myth for either Bella Coola or Tal io, although the concepts with regard to land are identical with those of the Kimsquit. This really gave a sacred sanction to the possession of land, an important matter to a people so religiously inclined as the Bella Coola.

The reader who has grasped the somewhat abstruse concept of the names of an ancestral family will have little difficulty in understanding the system of land tenure. Hunting and collecting grounds taken possession of by the first people, or by their immediate descendants, are the pro erty of their offspring, the ancestral family. The Bella Coola term for such an area is <u>so lol m</u>, also called, <u>s xen nsta</u>, which means, "Food supply."

It will thus be seen that a hunting-area is not the property of any one indi-

vidual, but belongs to a group of persons, most of whom live in a single village, but some of whom may be inhabitants of villages at some distance. As with names, there is no doubt that a man tends to lose those rights which are strictly his, if they are located at a distant village. Thus several informants claim that they have the legal right to hunt at Kitlobe, for example, but from mere difficulty of access they, nor their fathers, have exercised the right, and unquestionably it would be lost inthe course of a few generations, even without the utter decay of custom which has followed the incursion of the white man. For all practical purposes, a man hunts only in the hunting-grounds of his those ancestral families in whose origin myths he has names. Theoretically, he is entitled to hunt on any hunting-ground of any ancestral family of which he is a member, whether or not he holds a duly validated name from their origin myth. There is no necessity of validating the right to a hunting-ground as with a name, though a validated ancestral name is the usual mark of a man's right to that areax of the ancestral family to which that area belongs.

One of the most important concepts of the Bella Coola with regard to land is that it is inalienable. A man has the prerogative of using the land of his wife's ancestral family, but it is not his own, though his children have full rights to it. A guest at a village may be allowed to use the land of his hosts, but it does not become his. In the old days wars between the coastal tribes were common, but though slaves were taken freely, the writer heard no account of the capture of land; such is unthinkable to a Bella Coola. In fact several of the writer's informants asked him to explain how it had been possible in the late world war, for the allies, whose cause they believed to be righteous, to take land from Germany. If the victors had killed of enslaved the Germans it could have been moral and proper according to Bella Co la ethics, but to take land was most improper.

Since land is only valued for hunting or collecting purposes, it follows that it was not divided into small areas. Any man could build his house at will near the village. It is said that atKitlobe the fruitful crab-apple trees are the property of different ancestral families, themselves members of different tribes. It

might here be mentioned that the Bella Coola somewhat naively assume that all other coastal tribes have ancestral families similar to their own, although they recognize that these other tribes also have a clan system which has no counterpart in Bella Coola. Since the concentration of the rtibe on a small reserve and the beginning of agriculture, a system of individual ownership in cultivated land has sprung up. It is realized that if a man expends labour in clearing and cultivating a field, the produce is his own, and he can will this land to whomever he likes. The Bella Coola regard uncultivated land in the reserve as being at the disposal of anyone, a concept which the writer does not believe was taught them by any white administrator. Its origin seems rather to lie in the old belief that any old pre-empted land, far removed from a village, could be used by anyone. It is recognized that the reserve cannot be considered as a <u>qo lol m</u> belonging to any ancestral group, hence it is free to all. One corner of the reserve includes the lower part of a side-valley formerly used by the people of Tc no t̓. An Indian, whose ancestral family l ved at that village for generations, has set his bear-traps in this corner of the reserve for a number of years, without interference from other hunters, who go far afield with their traps. Even within the limits of the reserve it is felt that this man has the prime right to that area for the use of himself and his family.

Theoretically, it is possible for an ancestral family to die out. The writer received several accounts of old men who, believing themselves to be the sole survivors of their family, bequeathed their s hunting-grounds to those who had helped them in their old age. But in every case it the present turned out to be of doubtful value, since young men grew up who claimed membership in the supposedly defunct ancestral family and combatted the claims of those to whom it had been given. This always led to war.

The following is an instance of the feud which arose from the bestowal of a hunting-area.

About seventy-five years ago the people of Teawt (probably Bute Inlet) captured a Bella Bella woman as a slave. She escaped and fled up the Teawt River, hoping to come in contact with the Bella Coola who often hunted in that area. So it

transpired. The woman was found by the mother's father of my informant who carefully looked after the woman while during the time that he was hunting beaver, and brought her back with him to Bella Coola, thence sending her to Bella Bella. In gratitute her father, a Bella Bella chief, gave her rescuer the hunting-area known as Nut m, near Kwatna Inlet. In so doing he acted with the consent of the members of his ancestral family, and the land so alienated should have remained in the possession of the Bella Coola permanently. But the hunting-ground, far removed from Bella Coola, could not be used regularly by the Bella Coola to maintain their right to it, and after the death of the Bella Bella chief a number of individuals who claimed membership in his ancestral family laid claim to the hunting-ground. On one occasion, many years later, after the white traders had made their appearance off the coast, a Bella Coola went to Nut m and killed a large number of beaver. As he was leaving with their pelts he was murdered by some Bella Bella, ostensibly as a trespasser. But for the restraining influence of the white man this incident would undoubtedly have led to war. My informant still feels that he has every right to hunt at Nut m, in fact he did so several times when he was a young man, but his sons have never exercised the right, and it has practically lapsed, a condition which cannot be ascribed to white influence.

It is unfortunate that the above incident is drawn from Bella Bella where there is every reason to believe that the power of chiefs is much greater than among the Bella Coola. Consequently it is impossible to state with accuracy what right the Bella Bella chief had to dispose of the land. My informant simply assumed as a matter of course that he must have been so powerful that he could dictate to his followers, an unknown possibility in Bella Coola. None the less the incident is valuable, since the Bella Coola regards it as typical of what would be likely to happen should a Bella Coola try to give away land. Though Impelled by motives of generosity or gratitude, old men have sometimes done so, but always they have forgotten someone, perhaps a mere infant, who on growing up lays claim to the so lol m.

Hunting-grounds are not the only valuable parts of the country. Even more im-

portant ~~timmmm~~ are stretches of the river suitable for salmon-weirs. With these can be included good places for olachen nets, and rocks where these fish x can be caught with scoop-nets. Like hunting-grounds, these were pre-empted by the first people and have passed into the ownership of the ancestral families descended from them. It is needless to repeat the gradual lapsing which follows ownership rights in a ~~diffmmmmt~~ distant area, the principle is that which has already been described.

In one respect, however, salmon-weirs differ from hunting-areas, since it is assumed that the latter can be used by any number of individuals, whereas the number of salmon traps possible at any one weir is limited. Again the mythological origin must be given to explain the customary usage. If, for example, a salmon-weir built by one of the first groups of people to populate this earth was fully manned in the third generation by ten individuals, it is assumed that ten ~~mmmmmmmmmmm~~ is the largest number of traps possible at that weir. And those who have the right to use that weir are ~~mmmm~~ the members of the ancestral family who use the names of these first users. At this point the logic of the Bella Coola fails to uphold the mythological pattern. No salmon-weir has remained in existence since the beginning of time; at the time that one broke it might happen that the proper owners were infants, and those who repaired the break became regarded as the real owners. The system of ownership prevailing at the time of the abandoning of the weirs, ~~mmmmm~~ was that individuals, ~~mmm~~ not groups, had rights to certain sections of the weir which were willable ~~mm~~ like other personal property. In some cases this right was transmitted with a name, which had to be duly validated by the transmission of goods, in other cases no name was necessary since it was recognized that the bestower had full right to that part of the weir in virtue of the work which he, or a near relative, had contributed to the construction. (1) An owner frequently loaned his right for a night, or longer period, receiving goods in return, and not forfeitting his ownership thereby. The writer heard of no case in which the right to a certain section of salmon-weir was given to a non-member of the ancestral family. Theoretically, this would be possible, but practically it would be so inconvenient that it is most

(1). The writer had great difficulty in learning about the distribution of rights to sections of salmon-weirs. The evidence is conflicting, and though every effort was made to verify and check the above, the writer would not be surprised if there were ~~mmmmmmmmmm

unlikely ever to have occurred, since the Bella Coola is never so much a slave to legal privileges that he fails to be guided by common-sense.

To anyone familiar with the definite social groupings of a tribe that is divided into clans or land owning families, the ancestral family of the Bella Coola must appear as a vague and unreal unit, only distinguished by its intangibility. So the writer found it when investigating in the field. When first the first information began to accumulate I fully expected to find some definite obligations incumbent upon all members of the ancestral family. Every effort was made to discover these, but without result. Without asking a direct questions the point was raised whether, if a man was killed, the members of his ancestral family would unite to avenge him, and conversely, whether they were liable for the deeds of any member. In each case the reply was in the negative; it is a matter that concerns only his immediate family. In regulating marriage the ancestral family is important, since it is wise for a man or woman to seek his mate within the members of that group, but to do so is not compulsory. Theoretically, the terms of kinship applied to members of the immediate family may be extended to members of the ancestral family, but in practice this is rarely the case, and is functionless.(1). It might be argued that this somewhat wide application of kinship terms, verging on the classificatory usage, suggests is a relic of an earlier, and now broken-down, clan system. It is impossible either to prove or deny such a contention, but the writer feels that it is at least equally possible that if the Bella Coola have at any time been in contact with a people using the classificatory system, they may have adopted from such a people the practice of the wide application of names, and given them to members of the ancestral family. When trying to discover whether the members of an ancestral family ever contributed to a potlatch whereby one of their members follows established himself as a chief the writer received the following interesting comment. The previous winter my informant had been in Bella Bella, and there discussed the point which was raised by a Bella Bella chief whom my informant quoted as follows:—

"We laugh at you Bella Coola because each of you is always trying to be a chief. Our system is much better; we all help our chiefs."

My informant agreed with the Bella Bella man that there was a fundamental

difference between the practices of the two tribes.

It is possible that the recent decay of all Bella Coola culture has destroyed traces of more definite obligations with respect to the ancestral family. But the writer feels confident that it has always been a fluid unit. None the less, intangible though it is, it is yet a very real unit in the eyes of the Bella Coola. Its very lack of functions make it difficult to discuss, and the above account was pieced together from scraps of information collected from many informants at different times, yet it pervades Bella Coola life. Each individual knows those with whom he is related, often the exact kinship is lost, but it is remembered that a man from such-and-such a town married a woman from another village, and it is proved from the use by their descendants of names from the same origin myth. The concept of the physical strength imparted by a closely akin ancestry is always present, and it is when that is present that a person has the real "power" in the village founded by those first ancestors of his. For the ancestral family is usually thought of in terms of villages, a man belongs to the village where his first ancestor came to earth, though he is equally a member of other villages into which his ancestors may have married. A man without ancestry, without qo lol n, is a miserable creature, his home is nowhere, either actually in this world, or theoretically in the world to come. The ancestral family is a unit essentially held together by the ties of sentiment and family pride of ancestry.

In addition to the above social elements of the ancestral family, it is felt that all members of the family have certain tendencies. If one of the first ancestors had a certain physical peculiarity, or met with a particular kind of fortune, either good or bad, it is probable that his descendants are more likely to experince the same than any other people. These tendencies may skip many generations, may be inherited either through the mother or the father, in fact, Bella Coola belief on this point closely agrees with modern theories of heredity. (1). Such characteristics are:—

1. Proficiency in using tools.

(1). The Bella Coola term for such an inheritable tendency is qsalexam or xaxon xiiut.

2. Ability as a hunter.

3. The bearing of exceptionally well behaved children.

4. The bearing of exceptionally naughty children.

5. Disposition to steal.

6. Uncontrollable sexual desires.

7. Sudden death, that is, members of the ancestral family are less apt than others to die of disease.

8. Death by drowning. One of my informants, in whose family this is a tendency, has twice been thrown into the water and barely escaped. He fully expects to meet his fate in this manner.

9. Insanity. This is not a common malady.

10. Dribbling at the mouth with increasing age.

11. Liability to contract the skin disease known as Log Ix. With regard to the transmission of this disease the writer received the following surprising information. If a relative of a sufferer should drink from the same bucket or use the same spoon as the patient, he is likely to contract the disease, whereas another person can use them with impunity. It seems clear that this statement must be based on a knowledge of germs learnt from the white man, and warped by a belief in inheritable tendencies, although the writer is puzzled to know how the theory of germs reached his elderly Indian informant. It is possible that this statement is a relic of an old belief in the transmissability of disease through contact, but it is more reasonable to ascribe it to white influence.

In a later chapter an account is given of certain occupational abilities, including that of carpentry, which must be duly confirmed and validated by presents. The above are quite different; there are either present or absent without any action on the part of the individual.

1184 middle The numerical decrease of the Bella Coola with consequent abandonment of many villages made it ~~difficult to collect an instance of this~~ easier to obtain this instance of ownership of names in different tribes, than in different Bella Coola villages. The writer was assured that the attitude with which such possession is regarded is identical with that formerly held for a person whose names belonged to ancestral families located at defferent Bella Coola villages. With the present localization of the tribe in a single village the sense of possession of in different villages is waning.

1182 middle In former days it was customary to create a remembrancer whose duty it was to remember the ancestral myth. The older and more influential members of the ancestral family were accustomed to choose some intelligent and young relative to whom to relate the myth in great detail. One informant described how her mother, the last official remembr ncer, had been instructed by her grandfather. The old man had been accustomed to take his granddaughter, a girl about twelve years of age, to bed with him, and whisper to her the myth, with his hand pressed over her anus to prevent the escape of his words. At the conclusion of the recitation he always spat in her ears to make the words stick. The members of the ancestral family, recognizing that the remembrancer was the person best acquainted with the myth, were wont to consult him or her about it, and of course about the names embodied in it. A remembrancer had no authority to decree who should receive names, but appeals were often made to him, and a tactful individual was often able to settle disputes.

Land.

1184 1/4 The writer experienced great difficulty in investigating land tenure. The Bella Coola resent keenly the way in which their land has been occupied by white settlers without, according to the viewpoint of the Indians, proper compensation. Questions about land always excited informants, but every effort was made to verify the following statements.

THE VILLAGE COMMUNITY

The composition of the village community has been largely defined in the preceding section. Fundamentally, it consists of the descendants, traced in the patrilineal line, of the first settlers to occupy the site. Since a Bella Coola always describes himself as a native of such-and-such a village, it is obvious that the village community is a more obvious social grouping than the ancestral family. The member of a small and unimportant village often describes himself as a native of a neighbouring, larger village when at a distance from his home, but usually he is proud of his own village, where his first forefathers came to earth.

A village always contains more than the members of one ancestral family. Even before the coming of the white man, village sites were abandoned and people took up their residence with friends or relatives in another village. In fact, mythology contains instances of such migrations at the very beginning of time. In such cases, memory of the earlier home has been preserved for many generations, and may perhaps be the explanation of the many villages which are described as two, and which have two names. In the early days immigrants seem to have been fairly welcome; they added to the numerical strength of the village, while their presence was a boon to the original inhabitants who could boast kinship to the new comers or their descent from the first settlers. Since any people who were forced to abandon their own village naturally moved to the village of relatives, there is no difficulty in understanding the process by which they continued to int marry with their new neighbours. Thus two, or even more ancestral families, inhabiting one village tend to form a closely inter-related stock. Even in rare cases in which unrelated two ancestral families came to occupy the same village, they would unquestionably tend to intermarry.

In most cases the endogamic tendencies already described cause the village community to be largely the members of the ancestral family. But in addition there are always other occupants of the village, strangers who have fled from their homes

or illicit intercourse with slaves, guests and foreigners, especially Carriers temporarily resident in Bella Coola, and finally slaves, without status in the community. The real inhabitants, those whose power is firmly planted in the village are the descendants of the first group of settlers, and accordingly a relative coming to dwell in a new village would usually endeavor to obtain a name from the origin myth of the ancestral family occupying the village, and thus establish himself with the traditions of his new home. This is another illustration of the patrilineal tendency of the whole organization.

Politically, the village is the most important Bella Coola unit. Usually, though not always, related to one another, the inhabitants are always friends. If an attack is made on a village by a hostile war-party, punishing some breach of ceremonial custom, all the inhabitants of the village suffer equally. On the other hand if the inhabitants of a village decide to attack another settlement, there is no compulsion for anyone to share the burden, each individual, with the exception of slaves, follows his own inclination, and if he decides to stay at home, it is his own affair. In the case of murder or other wrong inflicted by an individual the responsibility rests on the immediate family, not the village. Factions within the village seem to have been unimportant; individual jealousies were common, and often led to murder, but if a family became unpopular or considered itself aggrieved, it usually moved to another village. Neighbouring settlements were usually on friendly terms and often assisted each other in war, but this was not compulsory. Indeed, cases are known in which a Bella Bella war-party, about to attack S nx̣ɬ, passed within a quarter of a mile of Qomqots without the inhabitants even warning their threatened neighbours.

As far as internal organization is concerned the village is as fluid a unit as most Bella Coola groupings. If one individual has attained a position of eminence through the potlatch system (1) he is "chief" of the village, and his advice is generally followed. If several men are of approximately the same rank there is no dominant chief. In any case, he lacks any executive authority and such obedience as is paid to him is due to his personal influence. Slight deference is paid to the man who uses the name of the eldest of the first group of settlers, the first

(1). See next chapter.

chief, but not sufficient to warrant the title of X "chief" with the significance usually attached to the term. The important members of the village are accustomed to meet for the discussion of ceremonial matters, and the village functions as a unit for all dances; in fact this ceremonial unity can be said to be the most important function of the village.

With the exception of those few village built on the sea-shore, each Bella Coola village consists of a row of houses on the river bank. They are of the usual rectangular, pile-built type typical of the North-west coast. In front of them stretches a side-walk, usually supported by piles on at least the river side to preserve levelness. The house too have often piles beneath their front side, made necessary by the steep slope of the bank. In large villages there may be two rows of houses, behind and above one another. Usually there is a rough path parallel to the row of houses at the very edge of the river, The number of houses varies; before the small-pox epidemic some villages contained as many as thirty of forty, others only two or three. There is no definite arrangemnt of the houses in order, anyone can build where there is a vacant space. Much the same arrangement of houses took place in the sea-coast villages, each of which depended for its main sustenance on an ocean fish-trap, as the river villages depended on a salmon-weir.

The central part of each house is occupied by a large fire, often sunk a considerable distance below the level of the floor. Around this is an open space free to all, and toward the side-walls are raised the partitions to form bed-rooms for the different families, or different members of the same family. Frequently the flooring is removed in three or four parts of the house for small fires on which the different families cook, the central fire being used for heating and for more important meals. The number of families occupying a house depends on its size; and important chief, with a large number of relatives often builds an enormous house which is occupied by ten or more families, smaller houses contain only two or three. Life in the larger houses is free and open; people are constantly passing in and out, and anyone present when food is being distributed is given a share as a matter of course. Most of the houses are decorated with carved upright

posts and paintings on the beams and back-wall. Through a door in this entrance is gained to the back-room which is so important in the dances. In front of each house rises a short totem-pole, either pierced for the door-way or standing on the opposite side of the side-walk.

THE FAMILY

It is probably no exaggeration to say that in every part of the world the most important social unit is the family. This is certainly the case among the Bella Coola, yet its lack of definite social obligations make it a difficult unit to define. Reduced to minimum size, the family consists of a man, his wive, or wives, and his children. Such a unit occupies one of the bed-rooms of a large house, and is the unit to which an infant automatically belongs at birth. Disregarding for the moment ceremonial obligations, which are shared by others, it is the father and mother who are responsible largely for the upbringing of the child. Such education as he receives comes from them. This is chiefly imitative; a boy, as he increases in strength, naturally follows his father on hunting expeditions or fishing. The mother teaches her daughters how to make baskets, and they follow her when she gathers berries and when she cooks and performs household duties. The Bella Coola are fond of children, often to the extent of over-indulging them, and they grow up amid the open life of the large houses, absorbing information of all kinds without being aware of so doing. It is needless to elaborate this subject, the life in which they are in contact and which they automatically absorb will become clear in the course of this monograph.

As far as functional training is concerned, only two kinds need be mentioned. A wise father carefully trains his sons to remember their debts (1), and the method of teaching ancient myths has already been described, otherwise there is little direct instruction. On the other hand, parents devote great care to furnishing their children with magical means of success, lacking which their path through life would

(1) The method is described on page .

be a thorny one. For success, according to the Bella Coola, is not the result of training or ability, but rather to certain inherent characteristics granted by the supreme deity and brought to fruition by magical means or the ritual acts of relatives. These often entail great labour and expense, but parents seldon neglect their duty, in fact care for their children is one of the strongest Bella Coola characteristics, though the methods in which it is displayed are so foreign to the white man that he tends to fail to realize their meaning. These will become evident in the course of the monograph, for the present the essential is to deal with the family itself. The hope of both parents is to have children to carry on their names; infanticide is unknown and the death of an infant is mourned almost as much as the death of an adult. Sterility and impotency are frequent causes for divorce.

At the present time there is a high birth rate in Bella Coola, although the heavy infant mortality prevents any great increase in the population. In the old days, it is said, there were always large families, though it is doubtful whether much confidence can be placed in this statement. In families where there are several children the first-born, whether boy or girl, assumes an important position. His or her influence, as eldest, is naturally considerable, but the parents foster this through th vague feeling that it is proper for the eldest to be the most important in the family. In adult years, and after marriage, the influence of the eldest of a family continues to have considerable weight with younger brothers and sisters.

If a man is poor he cannot hope to have more than one wife, and his family circle will be limited to their children, and perhaps to aged parents. On the other hand a wealthy and powerful man usually has a larger family. Not only may he have several wives, but aged relatives look to him for support and assistance. Such are usually welcome to live in his house, they lend what aid they can in collecting food, and it gratifies a man's pride and sense of power to be clol sely surrounded by a large family. The Bella Coola are, on the whole, considerate to their aged relatives. (1). The married sons of a chief usually live in his house,

(1). This is not true of the present. When the writer was in Bella Coola during the winter of 1923-24 a feeble old man, living alone, was often in actual want for food.

2 Village

~~Describe houses~~

~~Row of houses sans order.~~

~~Hangers-on, and slaves.~~

~~Each village a group of ~~st~~ people, clustering ~~around~~ ~~a~~ ~~chief~~ ~~town~~ Politically

~~Hangers on, slaves.~~

~~Politically independent, e.g. war, claim tribute~~

~~far away~~

~~Appearance.~~

~~Houses~~

~~Instead potatoes.~~

~~Lots of animals~~